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66-3950

9 September 1966

Mr. Thomas McFee
Office of Science and Technology
Room 207
Executive Office Building

Dear Tom:

You have asked me for a statement of the functions and responsibilities of the Director of Central Intelligence's Staff for National Intelligence Programs Evaluation. I am enclosing a copy of Mr. McCone's letter of 3 September 1963 establishing this Staff and also a copy of President Kennedy's letter of 16 January 1962 to which Mr. McCone's letter refers. I am also enclosing a copy of a directive approved by Mr. McCone which, I think, accurately states the role contemplated for my Staff at the time of its creation in November 1963. These terms of reference, however, have never been circulated or used.

It may be helpful to say a word or two about the history of the development of the DCI's coordinating responsibility. As you know, of course, the statutory authority for this authority is the National Security Act of 1947. This act reflects conflicting pressures which existed at the time the statute was drafted and still exist today. On the one hand, the experience of Pearl Harbor was a motivating influence emphasizing the need for centralization of direction and control over all the intelligence activities and estimating facilities of the Government as regards intelligence affecting the national security. On the other hand, the arrangements established by the act were imposed upon and had to accommodate departmental and service intelligence components which commanded very considerable resources, at home and abroad, and were deeply entrenched in the organizational patterns of the departments and services which they served and to which they belonged. The act accordingly emphasizes

the importance of a coordinated intelligence effort but expressly provides that the individual departments of the Government "shall continue to collect, evaluate, correlate and disseminate departmental intelligence." The various functions assigned to the Central Intelligence Agency are expressly stated to be "for the purpose of coordinating the intelligence activities of the several Government departments and agencies in the interests of national security." The only specific authority which the statute confers upon the Central Intelligence Agency, however, is "to correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security." Otherwise, the Central Intelligence Agency's legal function is to act as adviser to the National Security Council on intelligence matters, specifically including measures for improving the coordination of the intelligence effort. The National Security Council, through NSCID 1, has directed that the Director of Central Intelligence, as an individual, "shall coordinate the foreign intelligence activities of the United States in accordance with existing law and applicable National Security Directive." The net effect of this legal matrix is a community, the components of which have defined responsibilities, derived in large measure from the departments in which they are embedded (except for CIA which is required to evaluate all intelligence relating to the national security), and a DCI who coordinates the community.

All this may be rather elementary but seems to me worth restating as I occasionally find considerable confusion about the extent of the DCI's authority even among senior and experienced officials of the Government. The point of course is that the national intelligence effort derives from what is, by legal definition, a community and not an integrated institution. The DCI's mission is thus truly defined as "coordinator" and not as "manager."

A good deal of concern was expressed during the early 1950's about the need for more effective coordination of intelligence activities and in 1956 the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board recommended that the DCI should appoint a deputy or chief of staff to whom responsibility for the direction of the affairs of the Agency could be substantially delegated, leaving the DCI himself free to concern himself with the affairs of the intelligence community as a whole. The then DCI, Allen Dulles, elected to reverse this process and appointed

a Deputy for Coordination to whom he sought to delegate coordinating responsibilities. He appointed a distinguished retired military officer, General Lucien Truscott, to this position. General Truscott devoted three or four years to the problem of defining and rationalizing the allocation of responsibilities among various intelligence agencies. This was accomplished largely through the renegotiation of the various NSCIDs which govern the responsibilities of the various intelligence agencies. On General Truscott's retirement, a Special Assistant for Coordination was substituted for the position of Deputy.

President Kennedy's letter to Mr. McCone restated the philosophy which was earlier enunciated by the President's Board to the effect that the DCI should concentrate on the affairs of the community as a whole and delegate his responsibilities for the Agency to a Deputy. Perhaps the most significant portion of this letter is the authority which it confers on the Director of Central Intelligence to deal directly with heads of departments and, jointly with them, to undertake a continuing review of all programs conducted by the Government involving foreign intelligence activities. In responding to this Presidential directive, Mr. McCone was particularly concerned about the increasing size, complexity and cost of the intelligence effort of the Government as a whole, of which the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress were increasingly aware. An institutional basis already existed for coordinating the flow of substantive information and judgments to policy makers through the Board of National Estimates and the Office of Current Intelligence in CIA. These arrangements were compatible with CIA's own statutory responsibility -- to correlate and evaluate national intelligence -- and were and are working effectively. An adequate basis for the coordination of espionage and counter intelligence activities had, by 1960, finally been achieved. Mr. McCone therefore saw his immediate problem as that of rationalizing the budgetary aspects of the community and providing for the most effective possible allocation of resources.

It was the view of those responsible for its establishment that the NIPE Staff, which Mr. McCone created in the fall of 1963, should function as an extension of the DCI's personal office and develop the information necessary to permit informed judgments about the emphasis appropriate for particular programs, the degree of overlap

and duplication in existing activities and the measures and resources required to fill intelligence gaps, etc. Except for Central Intelligence Agency programs, all resources required to carry on intelligence activities of the Government are funded through budgets presented and defended by other departments, principally the Department of Defense. Nevertheless, it has been generally recognized that the DCI has an overall interest in the size and character of the intelligence programs funded through these budgets and particularly a responsibility for determining the needs which these programs serve. The problem has been to make the DCI's guidance in this respect as effective and specific as possible.

We have adopted a number of approaches to this problem.

a. We have worked on the development of a central inventory of intelligence resources. This has been a difficult undertaking. Intelligence activities conducted by the Defense Department are presented, in conformity with Defense Department requirements and procedures, in a number of different programs using different methods and categories for purposes of describing the level of effort attributable to functional or geographical targets or support. We have provided DCI representation in the reviews of each of the three major intelligence programs conducted for the Secretary of Defense and have formulated procedures which permit an expression of the DCI's views about the size and scope appropriate for these programs. Any attempt at a consolidated presentation of intelligence resources in an integrated program seems to us premature. Nevertheless, we are working towards the establishment of a common depository of information about intelligence programs and resources which should ultimately be useful in determining the relative amount of intelligence effort which should be directed at particular objectives.

b. We have been preoccupied with various efforts to strengthen institutional arrangements which tend to contribute to a centralized understanding and direction of the intelligence effort. Primarily we have tried to strengthen

the USIB committee structure so that the needs of the community for information can be translated as clearly as possible into the particular product of a specific intelligence system or activity. An example of this is the work which has been done to identify the specific requirements of the Government for communications intelligence. The SIGINT Committee of USIB has been made clearly responsible for providing guidance to the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Agency regarding the needs of the intelligence community for coverage of particular communications sources and links. A subcommittee of the SIGINT Committee staffed with appropriately qualified individuals has been established for this purpose. It is serving very substantially to increase our understanding of the contribution reasonably to be anticipated from COMINT activity to specific national intelligence needs and thus our ability to focus the COMINT effort of the Government.

c. We have initiated a series of studies or surveys using what appear to be particularly qualified consultants to help us appraise and rationalize the total effort aimed at particular targets or problems.

d. In view of the mutual interest in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of intelligence programs conducted under the authority of the Secretary of Defense, a number of reviews have been initiated jointly by representatives of the DCI and the Secretary of Defense. The most recent example of these is the Joint Imagery Interpretation Review Group which was established to examine and make recommendations for the most efficient allocation of responsibilities for the interpretation of photography and related coverage obtained through overhead reconnaissance.

This is a rather general statement of what we are doing and how we are trying to do it. As you can see, we have been concentrating on the budgetary and program aspects of the community and on opportunities for strengthening organizational arrangements calculated to improve, within existing laws and regulations, the DCI's capacity to monitor and guide the community. Obviously, a continuing objective

of all reviews conducted by the DCI or in which he participates is to ensure that the totality of available resources and information available from all sources and systems is brought collectively to bear on significant problems. Obviously also, we are most concerned to ensure a proper definition and appreciation of the needs of the Government for particular categories of information and with the process by which requirements are formulated and levied on collection and analytical facilities.

Apart from our concern with resources, however, we are available to assist the DCI in any aspect of his community responsibilities. We have in the past been involved in matters as different as the degree of duplication considered permissible as between publications issued by different intelligence agencies on comparable subjects and in security problems arising from the behavior of personnel of a particular agency.

As regards the particular field of information handling and the practical possibilities for automation and related improvement in methods for the processing, storage, retrieval and collation of information, I have thought it wise to await the results of Bill Knox's panel investigation before initiating any specific action on the DCI's behalf. I am confident that your report will be extremely helpful and look forward to its completion with a great deal of interest.

Sincerely,

John A. Bross

Attachments

Distribution:

- Orig & 1 - Addressee w/atts.
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